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UNH's 21st Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Focuses On Combating Hate Jan. 27–Feb. 10, 2011

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Media Relations

UNH's 21st Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Focuses On Combating Hate Jan. 27–Feb. 10, 2011

January 20, 2011

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire's 21st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Jan. 27-Feb. 10, 2011, will engage the campus community in a dialogue about the recent increase in hate crimes and extremism in our nation. Featuring Morris Dees, co-founder of Southern Poverty Law Center, celebration activities will explore the reasons for the rise in hate acts, including, racism, the recession, anti-immigration sentiments, the political environment, homophobia, and religious intolerance. While all events are free and open to the public, please note that events on Thursday, Feb. 3, 2011, require free tickets.

This year's theme, "Combating Hate; Hope to Action," was developed in response to startling statistics revealed by the Southern Poverty Law Center, a nonprofit civil rights organization dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry. The center lists the number of hate groups at a record level of 1,000. Their research indicates that the number of militia groups grew by 244 percent in 2009.

For the past 25 years, Dees has confronted powerful forces of oppression, bigotry and racism, often at great risk to his reputation and person. Known for his innovative lawsuits that crippled some of America's most notorious white supremacist hate groups, he has received more than 20 honorary degrees and numerous awards. Those include Trial Lawyer of the Year from Trial Lawyers for Public Justice and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Award from the National Education Association.

In his commemorative address, "With Justice for All," Thursday, Feb. 3, at 7 p.m. in the UNH Memorial Union Building, Dees will highlight how commitment to justice will chart our nation's future as America becomes more diverse, and economic disparity widens. The event also will feature a choral performance and a spoken word performance by UNH students. A reception and book signing with Dees will follow the event. Earlier that day at 2 p.m., Katherine Brown, former president of the N.H. Women's Bar Association, will moderate a conversation titled "Unlearning Hate: Turning Corrosive Powers into Positive Action" with Dees and Tom Martinez, a former white supremacist group member.

A complete schedule of events:

Photo Exhibit: The Human Face of Hate Crimes: A Retrospective

Thursday, Jan. 27, 2011, 5 p.m.; Strafford Room, Memorial Union Building

Spiritual Celebration: Grounded in Hope: Empowered to Love, Inspired to Act

Sunday, Jan. 30, 2011, 4 p.m.; Community Church, Main Street, Durham

A Conversation (Ticketed Event)

Unlearning Hate: Turning Corrosive Powers into Positive Action with Morris Dees and Tom Martinez

Thursday, Feb. 3, 2011, 2-4 p.m.; Granite State Room, Memorial Union Building

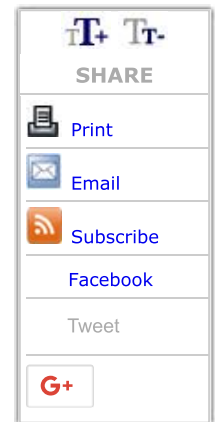
Commemorative Address (Ticketed Event) With Justice For All

Thursday, Feb. 3, 2011, 7-8:30 p.m.; Granite State Room, Memorial Union Building

Open Dialogue: Putting Belief into Action

Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011, 12:30-2 p.m., Strafford Room, Memorial Union Building

For more info on the celebration or to reserve a ticket for ticketed events go to <http://www.unh.edu/diversity/mlk/> or call JerriAnne Boggis at (603) 862-0693. Parking is free after 6 p.m. and on weekends. Call (603) 862-0693 for information about accessibility.



The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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